

## BASEBALL

Method of Throwing  
Ball Has Changed  
in Two Decades.

## ATHLETICS

Relay Racing Will Be  
Feature of St. Louis  
University's Indoor Meet.

## BASKET BALL

Teams of St. Louis League  
Have Shown Improvement  
Since Organization.

## TEAMS OF BASKET-BALL LEAGUE

## SHOW IMPROVEMENT IN WORK

Followers of Game Predict That Race for Second Honors Will Be Between North and South Side Branches of the Y. M. C. A.—Many Acquisitions to League Since Its Organization—Gossip and Notes About the Players.



PHIL STRIMLING.  
Official referee of the St. Louis Basketball League.

The improvement shown by the teams of the St. Louis Basketball League since the organization of that association has been marked, and many good players have come to the fore.

Now that one round of the teams has been nearly completed, the running of the teams can almost be seen, although many are still improving, and may come strong at the close of the season.

The followers of the game and of the league predict that the race for second honors for the league honors will be between the teams of the North Side Branch Y. M. C. A. and the South Side Branch of the same association.

The Missouri Athletic Club is the winner of the pennant, but by such a large margin that the real team race will be between the North Side and the South Side.

The five representing the Y. M. C. A. have shown the best form of playing so far. The members have been playing together for more than a season, which accounts for their better work.

One noticeable feature is the size of these teams. The players are slightly heavier than the others and come more closely to the M. A. C. team than any other.

Intense but friendly rivalry is springing up between the followers and players of these teams, and it is safe to predict that from now on they will be contenders for the second place.

The Union Club team is composed of players who are practically new to the game, but who are making rapid progress in the fine points of the sport.

Doctor Obrock, who is in charge of this team, has his eyes open for men who have played before but who have retired from the game temporarily.

His will try his best to get together a set of players that will bring the U. C. to the front in the race for honors in the league schedule.

**LACK TEAM WORK.**  
The Concordia Seminary team has one thing in its favor, and that is weight. The members of this team are plenty heavy, but lack team work. This is probably the result of not having played together for any length of time.

While they have good intentions they are practically just starting at the game, but this team is to be looked upon as making its hit later in the season, when they will have had more games and practice.

The Y. M. H. A. team has just joined the league, and while they have made good progress with outside teams they have had somewhat of a setback with the faster company. It is expected that when they get in the running they will give an account of themselves.

The Hebrews are heavy, and at the same time are fast, but they lack the experience of their rivals. Team work and goal throwing will be the points that will have to be practiced mostly by this team.

The Central Y. M. C. A. team has not made as good progress as was first expected, but Doctor Kennedy is doing everything in his power to help along the team, and says that he will be better represented as the season progresses.

Only two or three of these players have been on the team for any length of time, and when they shall have become used to the newer men the five will surely work well.

In practice last week it was noticed that the improvement had been made in the play of the Central Y. M. C. A.

**CAPTAINS ARE SELECTED.**  
The six teams of the Missouri Athletic Club Basketball League are making preparations for the first games that will be played in the near future. Captains have been selected and the race for the

## METHOD OF THROWING BALLS

## HAS CHANGED IN TWO DECADES

Infielders Deliver Better Now Than Formerly While Outfielders Are Not So Effective in This Respect—Jimmy Ryan, the Former Chicago Player, a Wonderful Thrower to Plate—Radbourne Has Greatest Pitching Record—Rusie the Best of All Speed Merchants.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

One of the prettiest and most important departments of baseball play—that of throwing—has undergone some curious and interesting changes in the last fifteen years. During that period, indeed, throwing has improved to an extent which can only be appreciated by a first baseman who has taken the quick passes from third and short ever since the Brotherhood's day.

At the same time outfield throwing has deteriorated and fallen off to an amazing degree. Fewer runners now circle the infield on wild shots than in the olden day, and, as a sort of compensation, fewer runners are nipped at the plate or between the bases by long throws from the gardeners.

Fifteen years ago there was seldom a game without at least one skyscraper shot by a shortstop or third baseman, a high tom which sailed far above first base and brought up somewhere near the stand, while the runner jogged round, seldom stopping short of third. Just to balance this and keep the equations even, there was also at least one delay-cutting play which had a delightful habit of rolling under the bench and getting lost amid the feet and baggage, while the runner steamed from crag to crag like the bounding chamois of the Alps.

Nowadays, those throws but seldom happen, and the fielding averages are materially improved thereby. The third basemen and shortstops seem to have acquired the knowledge of the range and distance to a certainty. They snap up ball after ball and send them across, true as a die, right into the expectant hands, and even their widest efforts seldom pass the baseman's hands. Nearly every infielder in either his league has acquired a clean-cut and accurate throw, and it is seldom indeed that a runner can get as far as second on an error pass to first.

**COMISKY SPEAKS OF CHANGE.**

"When I started in the game as a first baseman," says Charlie Comisky, "the first baseman didn't cover near the ground, they do now. They were all big men, too, and pinned to one spot as they generally were, they were the finest kind of targets to shoot at. Yet the wild throws used to sail over our heads and down around our toes game after game, and the cheering matches between the first and third basemen were hilarious features whenever one of these rockets had slipped by. 'Nowadays I have noticed, the infielders get them over in fine style. I'd have given something in the days of my youth to have always had men like Tannehill and Bradley chugging them at me. Tommy Leach is about the only man I've seen who retains any of the old-time wildness, and he isn't half as bad as they used to be.'"

The long throws from the outfield, meanwhile, have been growing steadily poorer. In former days beautiful shots from the field, getting runners as they slid home, were of delightful frequent occurrence, while right fielders were continually trying for base runners on short hits, and were often getting them at first. To-day it is practically a thing of the past. A free flight to right field to head off a batsman, while the throws home are generally beaten with ridiculous ease.

**LEFT-HAND THROWERS BEST.**

The great outfield throwers of a few years ago were, as a rule, left-handed men, and the way they could wing a ball to the plate was a great sight. Now, of course, with a runner second, and a ball going whizzing into the field, the runner would go round the bend at third and set full sail for home; the fielder would rise, take up the ball on scoop or bound, and throw almost with the motion of rising. Over the infield the ball would come, straight as an arrow—a desperate slide, a puff of dust—the catcher, taking the throw full and fair, hardly stepping from the plate, turned upon the runner, and the slide for life was lost.

"If I do say it myself," said Jimmy Ryan the other day, "I had the thrower, past and present, pretty well faded, owing to the fact that I could throw without stopping to take a forward stride with either foot before letting go the ball. I used to catch runners at the plate right along, and the only fellow I ever met who was able to turn the same tricks was Treadway, now doing the best he can in the little leagues."

The general grade of throwing from the outfield, at this time, is very poor, slow and inefficient aim, and have developed this part of backstop work to a fine point, although growing more and more mechanical in other ways each season. The modern pitcher has fallen off in the keen, lightning-like passes to first which used to mark the old-time boxer's work.

When the pitcher had the box to work in, and the rules of former years to help him, he developed almost phenomenal quickness and accuracy in shooting the sphere to first when a runner had strayed off the cushion. The slab, and latter-day rules, however, have spoiled much of this old-time skill. It seems to me, the modern pitcher throws to first it is generally a mere perfunctory toss, without any hope of catching the runner, and simply a hint to the other fellow that he had better stay close to the bag.

**RADBOURNE A GREAT PITCHER.**

The remarkable pitching of Jack (Chester) of the New York Americans during the season of 1904 established a record in point of games pitched and won, but old timers who remember Charley Radbourne still insist that the star twirler of the Providence Grays, who were the champions of the National League twenty years ago, was the greatest box man that ever faced the home plate. Radbourne was a man of iron nerve, indomitable pluck and great courage. He was also a close student of baseball and a scientific player. He was not a marvel in point of strength, but he had a head filled with gray matter which he never failed to use.

The Providence team, which was a crack combination in those days, was made up of such players as Joe Stuart, Jack Farrell, John Montgomery Ward, Grover, Nava, Cliff Carroll, Jerry Denny, Paul Hines, Paul Radford and Charley



LEE STILLMAN.  
The former Chicago University pitcher who will be a member of the Browns' twirling staff next season.

Sweeney. In Sweeney and Radbourne the Providence team had the best pitchers in the league, but they were different in habits and temperament. For Sweeney was a bullheaded chap, fond of swiftly-going companions, while Radbourne was just the opposite. The Providence team was coming down the home stretch in the race for the pennant and had twenty-one games to play. It was a close fight with the Boston, and the Chicago were also doing well with a great sport, yet, with Sweeney and Radbourne alternating in the box, the Providence team looked to have the best chance.

**SWEENEY REVOLTS.**

With twenty-one games left to play, therefore, Sweeney came to the grounds one day in no condition to pitch. But he insisted upon going into the box, and nobody had the nerve to refuse him. His curves were easy and he had a little speed that the opposing team was soon busy pounding the ball all over the lot. Sweeney was black with rage when Captain Starn suggested that he take a seat on the bench.

"I'll pitch this game out," said he, "or there'll be trouble."

So Sweeney kept on, and the other team raced around the bases in a steady stream. With the crowd yelling in derision, Manager Frank Bancroft and Captain Starn decided to take the ball by Sweeney out of the box. A free fight was imminent, but as the other players backed up the manager and captain, Sweeney finally walked to the bench, with the angry remark:

"That is the last game of ball I'll ever pitch for this club."

**RADBOURNE FILLS THE BREATH.**

And Sweeney, true to his word, never came back after he left the field. The team was in a predicament then, for Radbourne, who finished the game, was the only twirler left. It seemed too much to ask him to pitch in all of the remaining games, but Manager Bancroft hit upon a plan that worked like a charm. Radbourne had a reserve clause in his contract and was certainly talking of the slavery of the ball player.

He was a sort of anarchist and was never happy unless scoring the magnates



MARTIN DELANEY.  
Who will direct the indoor meet to be held at Jai-Alai in March, under the auspices of the St. Louis University.

for their so-called oppressive measures. Bancroft, therefore, told the president of the club that if he would cut the reserve clause out of Radbourne's contract he thought the pitcher would consent to officiate in each of the remaining games. Receiving permission to make such a proposition, Bancroft asked Radbourne if he would consent.

"I'll do my best," was the reply, and Radbourne began his task of pitching a magnificent game against the Boston, who were shut out as clean as a whistle. Out of the twenty games in which he pitched without a day's rest, eighteen were victories. The great pitcher had speed, curves and wonderful control, but he also used 'change of pace,' and was one of the first to adopt this scientific delivery. He was not a believer in strikeouts, but pitched for his fielders.

**RUSIE WAS A SPEED MERCHANT.**  
You will find ball players to-day who declare that Amos Rusie was the greatest pitcher that ever wore a toe plate. Mathematics with all of his blinding speed, never could touch Rusie in this respect. When Amos signed with the New Yorks in 1890 he was nothing but a big country boy, who possessed the strength of a young giant and had terrific speed. There was only one man who ever caught him successfully in his early career, and that was Richard Buckley, who, though gray-headed in the service, knew how to catch the young crack twirler. Rusie learned quickly, and soon developed an assortment of curves that has never been equaled. Later on he had almost perfect control of them, so much so that he frequently curved the ball over the plate for the third strike, when he was in the hole with three balls and two strikes called on him. Rusie pitched steadily, at a speed a greater part of the time, for eight years.

Keefe introduced him to the slow ball in 1892, and the big twirler soon got the hang of a beauty, but he always liked to use his cannon-ball delivery with the wide, sweeping curve that made every batsman in the profession fear him. A glance at the record will show that the poor games Rusie pitched in his career can be counted on one's fingers.

One of the Boston Americans, in another pitching wonder. The veteran has been hard at work for a dozen years, but can still speed them over with his lightning delivery. He is a member of the St. Louis, who pitched some excellent games last season, began his National League career simultaneously with Rusie, as Frank Rice took him to Boston from Kansas City in 1890. Cheever, McInitt and Rice were all in the same class, as young men in the business, who will not be ready for the shelf for some time to come. But not one of these crack twirlers has ever approached the record of Radbourne.

## "WIZARD" SHAEFER DECLARES THIS BOY WILL SUCCEED TO HIS TITLE



"WILLIE" HOPPE.  
The "Boy Wonder," who recently beat Champion Jake Schaefer in an exhibition match at the Grand Billiard Hall.

## RELAY RACING TO BE FEATURE OF ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY MEET

Coach Delaney of the Blue and White Will Extend Invitations to Best Runners in Country to Compete in Events at Jai-Alai in March—Local Talent Will Be Well Represented.

Relay racing will be the feature of the big indoor athletic meet to be held under the auspices of the St. Louis University in March at the Jai-Alai court.

Coach Martin Delaney, who will have sole charge of the meet, has not arranged his programme, but the majority of the track events will be relay races.

The contract for the big court has been let, but Delaney will insist that the place be well heated and this has been assured by the management.

The coach has acted wisely in not deciding on the exact date as the A. A. U. national championships are scheduled for March 11. The indoor meet of the Missouri Athletic Club was set for March 12, but has been postponed.

Coach Delaney does not want his meet to conflict with either of these, as he is desirous of having much of the talent that will compete at these places to strive for honors at his venture.

While all of the meets held by the St. Louis University have been successful at the big Coliseum it is the intention of Delaney to make this year's event greater than any of its predecessors.

The court at the Jai-Alai has been measured and a ten-lap track can be laid. However the railing between the parquet and the court would have to be removed and this would set the stretch in so far that it could not be seen from the gallery.

Delaney has decided therefore to have an eleven lap track laid. This will make it possible for all parts of the running board to be seen from any part of the house.

Work on the track and wooden infield will commence shortly, and the track will be banked as in the Mechanics Hall, Boston, where so many indoor records have been made.

While the laying of the track and infield will cost much, Delaney hopes to be repaid for it with new records being made.

The seating capacity of the inclosure is 1,000.

**TO HAVE GOOD TALENT.**

While the coach realizes that the build-

## FOOT RACING HAS REACHED HEIGHT.

Former Athlete Believes Sprinting Game Has Seen Its Best Perfection.

Detroit, Jan. 21.—"Foot racing, either in the form of sprinting or long-distance running, has reached its highest perfection. Not since 1873 has there been a single improvement in form, and if any records are lowered in the future it will be due, not to form, but to mere superior ability. Running has reached its zenith. But the field events, such as hurdling, jumping, pole vaulting and throwing the weights, have a brilliant future before them."

Such is the statement of Fred Stone, who was a crack sprinter in his day.

"With the exception of the crouching position at the start, no permanent change has been made since 1873, and even the crouching start is no better way of starting than straight up, knees bent, ready-to-go style. It was introduced solely for the sake of amateur sprinters and was brought into active use by the colleges because there were so many novices at the game then."

"The idea in the crouching start is this. It serves only to steady the sprinter. It does not offer a position to him for a faster start. With amateur sprinters the old method of starting was a hard one. They were naturally nervous, and it was hard for them to keep balanced. By the crouching start they get a better chance to steady themselves. This is the only reason why it is now so popular. Nearly all the shorter distance world's records were made with the standing start."

"The crouching start is one of the few innovations that have lasted. It has been a benefit in that it helps the amateurs and novices and those new to the game. Professional runners, amateurs, trainers and coaches, have worked on the starting, finishing sprint, ways of touching the ground, etc., but there is nothing new."

"Way back in '73 the sprinting game was perfected. So it was with the long-distance game. What records have been made since that time have been only the fruits of this perfection of form. I do not say that the records are lowest now. No, they are not, but there is nothing new to be with the same form."

"I regard the American college athlete today as far superior to the amateur athlete of any other country in the world. England is probably second to us. But they will not beat us. Why? For nearly a dozen different reasons. First, they have not got the trainers or coaches in England that we have here; second, they don't know how to train. Then, they would not train if they did know how. There are many other reasons."

"But the greatest is that they have not got the coach or trainer. It makes all the difference in the world who the trainer is. Here in America we have got a dozen that are worth anything. There are any in England. There is Mike Murphy, of Yale, who undoubtedly stands alone in his line. Then there is Graham of Harvard, Tim Robinson of Princeton, Fitzpatrick of Michigan, Kilpatrick of Wisconsin, and Swagg of Chicago, and they are all exceptional good men."

"When the London team to compete against our All-American team here in 1904, the Englishmen did not have a single first. It was due to Mike Murphy. There were Englishmen on that London team who could have won firsts. The material was there, but Mike Murphy's ideas and handling were too many for them. That was to my mind the greatest gathering of the world's athletes that was ever done."

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